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MICHIGAN STATE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

NEWS RELEASE

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Window Rehabilitation Workshops Teach Contractors to Repair Rather than Replace

KALAMAZOO – The second of three workshops aimed at teaching contractors to repair wood windows begins today in Kalamazoo and continues through February 19. In Michigan, 20 percent of the housing dates from before 1950, therefore, a number of houses have wooden double hung windows.

With the current emphasis on energy efficiency, many people consider replacing wood windows. This, plus the need to retrain workers converged to convince the city of Kalamazoo, the Michigan Historic Preservation Network, and the State Historic Preservation Office that Michigan needs more professionals who know how to repair existing wood windows. With a federal Certified Local Government grant from the State Historic Preservation Office, the city of Kalamazoo partnered with the Michigan Historic Preservation Office to train contractors.

According to State Historic Preservation Officer Brian Conway, “Generally speaking, people accept the idea promoted by window manufacturers that existing wood windows cannot be repaired. They think the only option they have is to replace them. That simply isn’t true. Typically, wood windows can be made to be just as energy efficient as replacement windows, last for decades, and have a faster payback than replacements.”

There is a shortage of people who know how to do this, however.

Sharon Ferraro, Kalamazoo’s historic preservation coordinator stated: “Window rehabilitation is a market with too few people trained to do the work. Rehab can be a steady job or a business opportunity for a small-scale contractor who services owner occupied homes and rental properties.”

Targeting unemployed or underemployed contractors, the city of Kalamazoo accepted applications from people throughout the state to participate in the two-week workshop. Students will learn to use the tools needed to start a window rehabilitation business or to add rehabilitation to the services they currently offer customers. Building on their successful Practical Preservation Workshop series, the Michigan Historic Preservation Network is providing their expertise and instructors, which will conduct a combination of classroom and hands-on training.

Applications are still being accepted for the third workshop for contractors, which will be held March 15-26. Similar training will take place for homeowners April 9-11 and April 16-18, 2010. Space is still available for both homeowner workshops. All workshops are free. For additional information contact Sharon Ferraro at 269-337-8804, or ferraros@kalamazoo.city.org.

The State Historic Preservation Office receives funding from the National Park Service for the identification and protection of historic resources and programs, including the Certified Local Government Program. For more information on the State Historic Preservation Office and its programs, go to www.michigan.gov/shpo.

The State Historic Preservation Office is part of the Michigan State Housing Development Authority. The Michigan State Housing Development Authority is dedicated to building a thriving and vibrant future for Michigan. MSHDA provides tools and resources to improve people's lives through programs across the state. These programs assist with housing, build strong neighborhoods, and help create places where people want to live and work. MSHDA's programs work in four areas: affordable rental housing; supporting homeownership; ending homelessness; and creating vibrant cities and neighborhoods. For further information on this or other MSHDA programs, go to www.michigan.gov/mshda.*

*MSHDA's loan and operating expenses are financed through the sale of tax-exempt and taxable bonds as well as notes to private investors, not from state tax revenues. Proceeds are loaned at below-market interest rates to developers of rental housing, and help fund mortgages and home improvement loans. MSHDA also administers several federal housing programs.

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